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Sample drama plans for preschool education

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Abstract

This study was conducted in the spring term of the 2008-09 academic year in Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir with forth- grade students as part of a ‘teaching practice’ lesson in Pre-school Teaching Department of Buca Faculty of Teacher Training. 14 students who participated in the study took the drama lesson during their undergraduate study. During this study, the students in Pre-school Teaching Department were taught what should be taken into consideration during drama planning and their suggested plans for application were examined together with the candidates themselves. Sample drama plans that are composed related to preschool education are presented in the study.

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Pre-school education -1; drama -2; drama plans-3; Pre-school education candidate teachers -4; drama lessons -5

1. Introduction

Every type of direct relation, action reaction traffic, even a least level of interaction between a person and a person is a dramatic moment or dramatic situation (San, 2006). Drama is a way that hangs on high level of creativity capability and researches human experience. Dramatic activities help people to know well themselves and others. Supports students on the way of becoming individuals who are skillful, coherent, perceptive who try to broaden their outlook by the facilities that they have, take part in life by their own thought and who are courageous. Dramatic activities have been used very early in preschool education too to explore and express himself (Gönen and Dalkılıç 2003). So that the place of creative drama in modern education programmes explicitly visible. Drama provides the child both as personel and as an individual in the community to maximize his potential which is the target of all educational programmes (Ömeroğlu, 2006c).

Researches related to drama in preschool period show that drama have positive effects on growth of children who are in preschool period. By the research on 5-6 years old children Ömeroğlu (1992) comes to the conclusion that creative drama activities effect the childrens linguistic creativeness in positive way. By the research on 5 years old children about the effects of drama method on learning number and transaction concepts Türker (2008) comes to the conclusion that drama method helps children to learn number and transaction concepts and this method supports these concepts. And by a eight weeks research on preschool children Önder and Kamaraj (1998) come to the conclusion that drama plays positive role on childrens social and emotional qualities to progress.

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The most significant aspect of creative drama as a way of learning is that it supports mental, social and psycho-motor abilities (Ömeroğlu, 2006a). Creative drama method contains cognitive, effective and psycho-motor behavioral objectives together and in this way it appeals to different characteristics and abilities of students. It also covers various learning types such as learning through experience, learning by acting, learning through interaction and collaboration, learning by discovery and discussion, active learning and finally emotional, social and conceptual learning (Alibeyoğlu et al, 2008). With drama children join to the activities directly. They express their ideas and emotions easily, they reach the information by observation and testing by themselves. The information obtained this way be more permanent (Kandır, 2006). Children use real objects also as symbolic means so they increase their imaginary power and creativeness and they learn information about concepts instantly and permanently by drama performances (Kandır, 2006). Action based techniques could be more effective than linguistic expression on education of preschool children. Preschool child can express his emotions by the actions, express his needs to people around him. He can learn a lot of concepts, processes, cases in drama performance by the actions (Önder, 2007).

Generally what drama teach to child is; to understand others by empathy, to catch the communication language, to notice that he is an individual of the community, to express himself by his linguistic, intellectual, physical and artistic sides, to be in peace with himself and community, to overcome the problems, to generate suggestions, to be open to critics and self criticism, to gain aesthetic sensibility, to build up a creative identity, to spread the sharing and solidarity senses in his life, to act democratically to different opinions and behaviours, to build up rightly behaviour, to improve the self reliance (Aksarı, 2005).

Generally, there are four types of application methods in drama performances: to gain confidence, to harmonize, to use five sensorials, to improve the observation ability, warmup and calm down works to listen to body and brain are adopted by certain rules and enforced by group leader. Play stage composed of pandomime and role playing is based on freely play set up and progress under determined rules and creativity and imaginary plays role in here. Improvisation works have determined less certain and you start with a determined subject, separate or group creativeness stand in the forefront. In the formations stage you start from a point not determined beforehand. The process and the end of the process indefinite (San, 1991). In the creative drama activities participant thinks, feels and acts with others. In creative drama a structure, that we can call it play, built up based on imagination and the play can be built up by using real lives and events (Ömeroğlu, 2006b).

It is really important for a teacher who is supposed to use creative drama method to know what creative drama is and to fully understand its components and steps as it will ease the presentation and progression of the lesson. Practices in a lesson in which creative drama method is to be used start with preparation and warm-up, continue with role-playing and end with evaluation and discussion (Alibeyoğlu et al, 2008). Some important points that teachers must pay attention while planning and exercising preschool period drama activities can be summarized as below (Akyol, 2009; Ömeroğlu, 2006a; Önder, 2007; Gönen ve Dalkılıç, 2006):

- While the activities are planning the starting point should be children's interests, needs, development characteristics and ages.
- Firstly, target and behaviour expected to achieve should be determined. Then, to achieve that behaviour and target a drama plan should be made. Target areas and behaviour expected to achieve shouldn't be same always while the target areas are determining. All target areas should take place according to children's needs.
- Teacher shouldn't forget that every child in the group has different characteristics and every child is unique. Furthermore teacher also shouldn't give up the idea of every child can have different experiences and different past lives. So that personal differences should be considered while drama activities are planning.
- While drama activities are planning, to improve of children's creativity, problem solving ability, adjudication ability, internal discipline, responsibility and collaboration senses should be considered.
- Giving a certain decision about a drama activity that for which age it is suitable could be misleading. Teacher should give a decision about any drama activity that if it is suitable for children that he is training by looking children's chronological ages and should consider children's attention, interest and ability of repetition of artificial based actions. Drama performances can be done before five years old that in drama the important one is the process not the result. But it is not fully possible to apply all stages of drama on performances done with under five or six years old children.
- The place that drama performances are done must be safe there must be enough space.

- While the drama activities are performing factor of risk should be estimated rightly. While acting a role, the risk of failure or stress shouldn't be faced with children.
- There shouldn't be a winner or loser in drama performances.
- Firstly, educator should determine what he wants to observe but also he should be sensible against an unusual behaviour.
- In drama children shouldn't be evaluated as clever or flat-footed, successful or unsuccessful.
- Some children may want to play always with same friends. And sometimes nobody wants to play with some of children. To take away this situation preschool period children should maintained to play with eachother with methods as giving color or animal names.
- While studying with children process could be easy to hard. The progress may be first, pandomime and role playing then improvisation. The children that drama is applied at the first time all the stages of drama may not come true. By the process progress of stages can be maintained.
- Playing the drama with actions do not guarantee learning. Child can gain capability and information by illustrating and giving meanings to actions that body do with linguistic symbols. So that it is important to make a discussion stage that actions are named, codified meanings are comprehended, differentiated or generalized.

2. Method

This study was conducted in the spring term of the 2008-09 academic year in Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir with forth- grade students as part of a 'teaching practice' lesson in Pre-school Teaching Department of Buca Faculty of Teacher Training. 14 students who participated in the study took the drama lesson during their undergraduate study. It is known that having information about activities in drama planning is not enough to prepare effective drama plans. Therefore, the more trainee teachers practice in drama planning, the better and more effective planning they will make for their drama lessons. During this study, the students in Pre-school Teaching Department were taught what should be taken into consideration during drama planning and their suggested plans for application were examined together with the candidates themselves. After the examination the problems observed were sorted out together with each trainee teacher to make necessary changes and corrections. It is thought of that the study would show the way to educators and researchers in the literacy who will make studies about drama in preschool period.

Drama plans should develop students' ability to improve their cognitive, effective and pscho-motor learning. They should also help students process information, emotions, and skills from easy to difficult, simple to complex, concrete to abstract, known to unknown, from close to distant environment and put them in such an order that one is a prerequisite for another (Öztürk, 2007). The lesson plans prepared during this study were carefully examined by two professionals in drama field and by one expert trainer in the field of pre-school teaching. After all the preperations for plans the candidate teachers were asked to put the plans into practice.

The drama lesson plans were prepared according to the criteria determined by the Ministry of Education considering the structure of the lesson and class atmosphere. All the lesson plans consist of three parts as warm-up, role-play, and evaluation. Sample plans regarding pre-school education are presented below.

Sample plan concerning seasons is presented in Table 1 .

3. Results

Table 1. Sample Drama Course Plan About Regarding Seasons

DATE	1 APRIL 2009
GROUP	PRESCHOOL GROUP
NAME OF THE STUDY	fight of the seasons
MATERIAL	crowns for queen and king, crowns representing four seasons(fall,winter,spring,summer)
AGE GROUP	60-72 MONTHS
DURATION	30 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saying the features of events or things • Using the body, gestures and mimes • Acting according to oral instructions • Joining group activities

OBJECTIVES AND GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out group responsibilities • Obeying the rules during group activities • Expressing emotions and ideas in different ways • Speaking according to the given role in the activity • Respecting his/her own and others' rights
WARM UP	<p>Children play the following game: 'Come on kids, let's hold hands and make a baloon. Our baloon is small, let's blow it up and make it big. Now it's losing air, let's blow it up again'</p> <p>The leader tells children a short story about seasons. He/she talks about a queen and a king in a country. The king and the queen are very happy and their country is really peaceful. However, one day a big fight breaks out in this peaceful country and the king calls the fighters into his presence. The fighters are four seasons and they cannot decide who will be the first to appear. The king eventually gets angry and asks them to introduce themselves so that he can make a decision. And the seasons start to introduce themselves. The fall says: My clothes are always yellow and I love this color very much, as I love fall very much my clothes are always yellow. The winter says: My clothes are always white and I love this color very much, as I love winter very much my clothes are always white. The spring says: My clothes are always green and I love this color very much, as I love spring very much my clothes are always green. The summer says: My clothes are always red and I love this color very much, as I love summer very much my clothes are always red. After listening to the seasons, the king decides that they should always appear in the same order as they did and there has been no fights since then. The seasons exhibit their skills when their turn comes. After completing the story, the leader distributes the roles and he asks the children to act out the story with the costumes and materials given.</p> <p>After the study is over, the children sit down to make a circle. The leader asks children: What did you like? Are there things you didn't like? What would you do if you were the seasons or the king? What would happen if the seasons appeared in a different order? The questions might vary according to the flow of the role-play.</p>
ROLE PLAY	
EVALUATION	

There is a sample drama plan about importance of cleaning in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample Drama Course Plan About Cleaning

DATE	1 APRIL 2009
GROUP	PRESCHOOL GROUP
NAME OF THE STUDY	CLEANING
MATERIAL	Laughing and angry faced microbe costume made of carton paper
AGE GROUP	60-72 MONTHS
DURATION	30 minutes
OBJECTIVES AND GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be able apply cleaning rules • To use the body, gesture and mimics • To act appropriately according to linguistic instructions • Joins group activities • Fulfills the responsibilities that are taken in the group • To obey the rules of group activities • To express emotions and ideas by several ways • To speak in the activity appropriate to the role that is committed
WARM UP	<p>Group build up a circle by hand in hand, start to walk according to instructions of leader. Leader wants children to walk according to instruction as on the clay, as there is brunt on the shoulders, as on hot sands, on ice, like a robot, as on the broken glass, happy, scared, angry etc.</p> <p>Leader expresses a short story about microbes to children. He tells that a microbe moves in to a house and walks upstairs, when he reaches to upper floor he knocks the door. Then he tells about the dialogue between the microbe and the child in the house. Leader expresses children that the microb tell child that he came to house to make him ill but the child looks after himself very well, he is so clean, vaccinated and eats properly and tell that he cannot make the child ill. Leader tells that at the same time mother cleans the house with soapy water and the microb glided because of the soapy water and find himself out of the house.</p> <p>Leader ends the story by telling that microbes cannot tolerate to clean water and if we would be healthy, clean and well kept microbes cannot get close to us.</p> <p>After ending the story role distribution is evantuated. Then leader wants children to play the story by giving children miscellaneous costumes and materials.</p> <p>After the end of the work leader gives paper and crayons to children. He tells them "I want you to draw a picture about what we have done". By the end of the paintings a conversation about paintings is done together. Leader asks questions about the importance of cleaning.</p>
ROLE PLAY	
EVALUATION	

Emotions and organs are emphasized at the third sample plan. This sample plan is given on Table 3.

Table 3. Sample Drama Course Plan About Emotions and Organs

DATE	1 APRIL 2009
GROUP	PRESCHOOL GROUP
NAME OF THE STUDY	Organs-Concepts-Emotions
MATERIAL	Wool, organ pinafore, emotion cards
AGE GROUP	60-72 months
DURATION	30 minutes
OBJECTIVES AND GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be able to classify objects, occasions or cases according to their qualities • To show the object that placed in a group of objects • To be able to do particular moves that can be done by physical coordination • To walk appropriately to linguistic instructions • To run appropriately to linguistic instructions • To be able to notice own emotions • Expresses his emotions • To be able to notice the others emotions • Shares others emotions
WARM UP	<p>All group members stands and composes a circle. Teacher says the name of the organ or part of the body which he wants to be and delivers bobble of wool to student that he chose without leaving the cusp of the rope. Child who takes the bobble says the name of the organ or part of the body that he wants to be and delivers the bobble to another student without leaving the rope. By this process the rope should be tight. When the turn is at last child he says his name, tighten the rope and at the same time sounds like the organ or part of the body (heartbeating, clapping, jumping, running, walking) if it has a voice. So that the bobble comes again to the teacher coiling by students one by one. But in the meanwhile every child says the name of the organ or part of the body and also sounds its voice.</p>
ROLE PLAY	<p>Teacher asks every child to come near him and ties up their eyes and wants them to choose an organ from the bag that organs taken out from the organ pinafore are placed in. Wants student to guess the organ rightly. After the guessing different questions are addressed to student. For example he asks for heart; “once a day the owner of this heart got very excited, what do you think about the speed of it? Can you show us (with moves like running, walking or jumping)?” then the whole class follows the moves of their friend. If there is a student who finds a different move that move is also done by whole class. For lungs; “the owner of these lungs has smoke too much. How do you think these lungs feel?” question is asked. To choose this emotion out of emotion card is wanted from student. After choosing all class do the mimics of that emotion; some moves are done with that feeling. For example to dress, to brush teeth, to wash face with sad expression. For the stomach; “one day the owner of this stomach hasn’t eat anything or has eaten too much, how do you think this stomach feels?” question is asked. To animate the situation that distresses the stomach is wanted from students. Actions like eating quickly, eating too much then acting like having stomachache. It is said to students that a drama is going to be performed. Groups that each have fifteen students are composed. It is said to students that they built up a man’s body but there is some imbalance on the body that places of some organs are confused. Every student form a piece of an organ is said to students. The card which shows that organ hangs up on students neck. Students are mixed up and one student is chosen to solve the puzzle. The mission of the student is to place organs in this alive puzzle.</p>
EVALUATION	<p>At the evaluation stage children are asked which game they like most and what they feel while playing that game. They are asked that at which game they coerced most and what kind of rule modification would make the game easier. Evaluation is completed by asking children that if it is more cheerful to play the alive puzzle stage of drama as an organ or as the owner of the body and placing the organs.</p>

At table 4 sample plan named “Growth of a Seed” is presented

Table 4. Sample Drama Course Plan Named “Growth of a Seed”

DATE	6 APRIL 2009
GROUP	PRESCHOOL GROUP
NAME OF THE STUDY	Growth of a Seed
AGE GROUP	60-72 months
DURATION	30 minutes
OBJECTIVES AND GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranks the beings according to their growth stages • Ranks the events according to their becoming times • To be able to do specific moves which requires physical coordination • To act appropriate to linguistic instructions • To be able to notice own emotions • To express his emotions • To be able to notice others emotions • Shares others emotions
	All group members stands and composes a circle. Teacher says, “ Now we are in a big garden. There are

WARM UP	fruits on trees, lets gather them together". At the same time every body says, "let's jump, gather the fruits and throw them to chest" and the fruits are gathered. And then teacher says, "the fruits on trees have fell down, now gather them together". Fruits on the ground are gathered too by saying, "let's bow, let's rise, gather the fruits on the ground and throw them to the chests". The teacher says, "we are the seed that had been in the book we just read".
ROLE PLAY	Teacher takes all students to the centre of the class. And wants everybody to choose a suitable place for their trees. After students settled, teacher says, "I'm the gardener and you are my little seeds". Teacher wants everybody to sit down and shrink and says, "now I'm cropping you to ground". Students shrink and sit down. Teacher makes the move like throwing soil and says, "my little seeds now I'm covering you with soil". In the meanwhile teacher asks questions as followings; How is under the ground, bright or dark? Are you lonely? Takes the students answers. Teacher asks, "my little seeds what do you need to grow; what do you want me to give you? Waits until the students find the answer, rain. When students find the answer teacher says, "now it is raining, let's make rain sound" and rain sound is made together. After that wants them to grow up by saying, "now you take the water and grew a little. You are squeezed under the ground. You can rise up and be small saplings". Students stands up a little but it is not allowed to stand up completely. Teacher asks, "what do you need to be a tree?" Waits until students find the answer, sun. When students answer the question teacher says, "now I'm your sun, I'm heating you, you are growing and becoming big trees". Students become big trees by standing on finger tips. Meanwhile children are wanted to find a shape peculiar to their tree. And then the question, 'you have lack of something, what can it be?' is asked. Teacher waits until students find the answer, fruits. After finding the answer, teacher wants them to gather eachother fruits. Then they act as washing and eating them.
EVALUATION	At the evaluation stage children are asked which stage of the seed game they like most and what they feel while playing that game. They are asked that at which game they coerced most. Evaluation is completed by asking them if it is more enjoyable to be a seed under the ground or to be a small saplings or big trees. Following questions are asked: Have you or a parent of you plant a seed? If yes, how did they grow up? What would happen to seeds if there weren't sun and rain?

4. Discussion

Literature revealed that in order to evaluate the effectiveness of drama as an instructional method, qualitative data from the drama lesson plans was collected. (Flynn, 1995; Gabb, 1994; O'Neill, 2008; Sausbury, 1982). Consequently, it is important to prepare well-structured drama plans to ensure the effective usage of drama method. In some research, drama plans which were prepared under the framework of the research were presented. (Mattevi, 2005). In this research also, sample lesson plans which were prepared by the pre-school candidate teachers after they received their training were presented. Well-prepared lesson plans are needed to ensure the effectiveness of drama lessons; in this respect it is thought to be important to present well-prepared lesson plans to teachers and candidate teachers that they can make use of.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

During this study, the students in Pre-school Teaching Department were taught what should be taken into consideration during drama planning and their suggested plans for application were examined together with the candidates themselves. After the examination the problems observed were sorted out together with each trainee teacher to make necessary changes and corrections. The lesson plans prepared during this study were carefully examined by two professionals in drama field and by one expert trainer in the field of pre-school teaching. After all the preparations for plans the candidate teachers were asked to put the plans into practice. After the research on plans some problems are determined. These are trouble on determining the content of drama that is suitable for target benefits, deficiency of questions in evaluation section by quality and quantity and absence of accordance between the sections of drama plan. The problems which are determined in the drama plans are explained to candidate teachers by face to face discussion, and the needed corrections and arrangements are made by them.

The drama lesson plans were prepared according to the criteria determined by the Ministry of Education considering the structure of the lesson and class atmosphere. All the lesson plans consist of three parts as warm-up, role-play and evaluation.

Sample drama plans that are composed related to preschool education are presented in the study.

Drama helps children to discover that it is necessary to live with other people in a harmony and cooperation with them (Önder, 2007). In this sense, if the abilities that gained by drama are considered, teachers should use the drama method more often. Especially while the preschool candidate teachers are educated, the information about drama

should be given and they should be educated about how drama based course plans are prepared. Sample drama plans should be developed for present teachers to take the advantage of.

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